

QA-55A
Ripley Slave Quarter
Church Hill
Private

2nd quarter 19th century

This small brick building is one of the most unusual in the county. Oral tradition suggests that it was built in the 1790's and was used as a slave quarter by the Brown family. Architectural evidence points to a construction date of circa 1840, but remains ambiguous as to its use. The large cooking fireplace could mean it was used as a summer kitchen, but the remote location from the main house makes this unlikely. As a convincing case cannot be made for either use, it seems best to rely on oral tradition until documentary evidence can be found to support or refute the slave quarter tradition.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Slave quarter at Ripley

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

West side of Md. Route 213 1 1/2 miles north of Church Hill

CITY, TOWN

Church Hill

☒ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Queen Anne's

3 CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY**☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS**☐ OCCUPIED☒ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE**☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☒ OTHER: vacant**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mr. and Mrs. Madison B. Bordley, Jr.

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Church Hill

☐ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21623

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Queen Anne's County Courthouse

Liber #: TSP 24

Folio #: 288

STREET & NUMBER

Courthouse Square

CITY, TOWN

Centreville

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The slave quarter at Ripley is located several hundred yards to the northeast of the main house, directly adjoining a gravel driveway which leads to the tenant house and several farm buildings.

The building is of brick construction, 22 feet long and 19 feet wide, with a gable roof and a single flush chimney centered on the west gable. The walls are laid in five-course bond, with a corbeled three-course brick cornice on the front and rear facade. The bricks vary in size and color, and the general character of much of the brickwork combined with the random appearance of glazed headers suggests that the building was probably built in the second quarter of the 19th century using salvaged 18th century bricks.

The front (south) facade is almost completely hidden by a very low lean-to porch that extends across the entire facade. It is supported by hewn plates that are mortised into the tops of rough cedar posts which are set directly in the ground. The porch roof is simply a continuation of the main roof pitch, and therefore reaches to

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.1 DESCRIPTION

within about 4½ feet of the ground. Both roofs are corrugated tin.

The only exterior door is located near the center of this facade, with a small four-light window located in the east bay. A single four-light window is located in the east gable, and a pair of four-light windows flank the chimney in the west gable. All three of these windows are located quite high in the gable, but still provide light for the main floor inside. On the rear facade, there is a four-light window in the east bay and a wide, eight-light window near the center. The window and door openings on both facades have heavy exposed wooden lintels. The door frame is beaded, but otherwise there is little attention to detail. The rakeboards are not early, and the roof is 20th century.

The interior is divided into three rooms. A vertical beaded board partition to the right of the front door divides the space into a large common room/kitchen on the west, and two small, unheated sleeping chambers to the east. The partition between the two sleeping chambers is constructed of rough-sawn, unbeaded vertical boards that do not extend all of

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.2 DESCRIPTION

the way up to the ceiling. This wall is apparently later than the beaded partition, which in turn may not be original. The plastered ceiling passes above the top of the board partition suggesting it may have been added at a later date. The door to the northeast chamber appears to have been cut in later still, and the rough board partition installed to create two chambers.

All three rooms have board floors laid on sleepers that are probably bedded in sand. The interior is plastered, applied directly to the inner face of the exterior brick walls. The ceiling is also plastered, but not to the ceiling joists in the usual manner. Instead, there are just four joists, and these apparently serve little or no function, except to support heavy $17\frac{1}{2} \times 2$ planks laid on top of the joists along the facade walls of the kitchen, apparently serving as shelves. The joists may have been intended to act as tie beams between the side wall plates, but they do not seem to fulfill this purpose. The plaster lathing is nailed directly to the inside face of the roof rafters and the bottom face of the collar beams. Where the lathing is visible, it is

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.3 DESCRIPTION

clearly machine sawn and attached with small machine nails. There is no evidence of whitewash or any other previous finish on the roof framing, so the plaster can be assumed to be original.

The interior partitions and two of the doors have been whitewashed. The front door is constructed of vertical random width beaded boards secured to three wide, beveled battens with wrought nails. It is hung on wrought strap hinges with both wrought nails and early machine nails. A number of the original leather washers remain in place. The inner face of the door is painted blue on top of a base coat of Spanish red. Ghosts in the paint show where a larger pair of strap hinges were positioned at one time. The absence of evidence of corresponding pintels on this door jamb suggest that the door was salvaged from another building at the time this structure was built. The door to the southeast room is made of vertical boards beaded on both faces, and secured to three beveled battens with wrought nails. It is hung on H-L hinges with wrought nails and leather washers. The door to the northeast room is unusual in that it is constructed of unusually thin boards, only 7/16

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.4 DESCRIPTION

inches thick. They are beaded and are secured to three beveled battens with machine nails. The hinges are H-L, but they are attached with machine nails and leather washers.

Perhaps the most unusual feature of this building is the manner in which the front and rear windows are operated. A wooden frame on the interior face of the opening allows the single piece of sash to slide sideways on runners. Horizontal sliding windows of this type are extremely rare. The only other known example is the window in the upper rear wall of the original stair tower at Cloverfields (QA-2). This is different, however, in that it is simply a six-over-six window mounted sideways. The windows on the Ripley slave quarter are mounted in the normal vertical position, and were intended to work in this manner.

The chimney has partially collapsed, but the curved iron lintel support remains among the debris, as does a very fine wrought iron trammel bar.

The roof is of common rafter construction, 37 degrees in pitch. The rafters rest on top of a heavy top plate, and are half-lapped and pegged

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.5 DESCRIPTION

at the ridge. The collar beams are half-dovetailed into the rafters and pegged. The four large joists mentioned earlier are mortise-and-tenoned into the side of the wall plates, but serve no real purpose other than as tie beams.

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This small brick building is quite unlike any other surveyed thus far in Queen Anne's County. The general character of the brickwork and certain architectural details clearly date it to the second quarter of the 19th century, but the overall form, plan, and interior arrangement are quite unusual. The original purpose of the building is for this reason open to question. A strong oral tradition in the Brown and Bordley families identifies the building as a slave quarter, but architectural evidence is somewhat ambiguous and documentary evidence is lacking. Although numerous land owners in Queen Anne's County were slave holders, few buildings with a legitimate claim to being slave quarters have survived. Among this group, the building at Ripley is among the most acceptable, reinforced by 19th century tax records which confirm that the Brown family did own slaves.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

CONTINUATION SHEET

8.1 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The architectural evidence, as noted, is rather ambiguous. The plan has been modified somewhat, and probably originally consisted of the larger west room dominated by the fireplace and one smaller unheated room to the east. It has been suggested that this was simply a detached kitchen with a store room, but the distance separating it from the main house argues against that solution. Conversely the high plastered ceiling in place of a loft seems unlikely in a slave quarter. As a convincing case cannot be made for either use, it seems best to rely on oral history until documentary evidence can be found to support or refute the slave quarter tradition.

Architecturally, the building is of interest due to an unusual combination of plan and form. Also of interest are the horizontal sliding sash windows, the only recorded example of this type in Queen Anne's County.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Orlando Ridout V, Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Queen Anne's County Historical Society

DATE

12/13/78

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Centreville

STATE

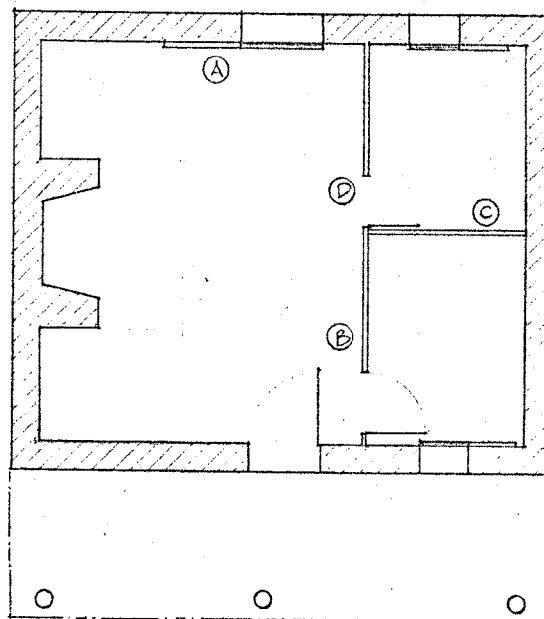
Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

- A HORIZONTAL SLIDING SASH WINDOWS
- B BEADED BOARD PARTITION APPEARS TO BE ORIGINAL
- C PAIN BOARD PARTITION APPEARS TO BE LATER
- D SMALL DOOR MAY BE LATER



0 2 4 6 8 10
SCALE: $\frac{1}{8}" = 1'-0"$



ORLANDO KIDOUT V

QA-55A

RIPLEY SLAVE QUARTER
CHURCH HILL, MARYLAND

OCTOBER 26, 1978



QA55A
slaveQuarter
at Ripley

Mary McCarthy
Spring/Summer 2003
Digital color photo on file at MHT



QA-SSA
slave Quarter
at Ripley

Mary McCarthy
Spring/Summer 2003
Digital color photo on file at MHT





QA -55A Ripley Slave Quarter
DRV 1978



QA-55A Ripley ^{Slave Quarter}
^ Church Hill
OK V 1978



QA-55A Ryley Slave Quarter

Cooking fireplace in slave quarter
Church Hill

ORV 1978